

CHARIVARIA

SOME surprise has been expressed at Moscow reports that the famous tomb in Red Square, suddenly reopened after having been suddenly closed for six weeks, still contains Stalin. What actually happened, of course, was that he was taken out and put back again.

No Stopping Them Now

FEMINISTS thought their finest hour had struck when Miss Rose Heilbron, Q.C., recently became "Madame Recorder," and it must have been with delighted surprise that they learnt still



more recently, from the *Daily Telegraph*, that Mrs. Gladys Lawson, of Driffild, had become the first woman Chief Ranger in the King Alfred the Great Court of the Ancient Order of Foresters.

Disappointing

Eyes in Washington, suggests a diplomatic correspondent in America, were only idly turned on Mr. Macmillan's work of Cabinet building, and the post of Foreign Secretary was the only one that Mr. Dulles was interested in. Even his interest waned when he didn't get it.

Ace

FEW grimmer battles have taken place than that in Bonn last week, when ten British finance experts faced ten German in a struggle over the upkeep of four British divisions on the Rhine. German finance experts are notoriously steel-nerved, ice-brained and ruthless, and it was a great relief to read in the *Daily*

Express that our own team was led by Mr. Paul Gore-Booth, "who once shared a TV appearance with chimpanzee J. Fred Muggs."

Thrift Note

THE growing conviction that money is nothing more than a game with printed numerals—borne out recently by Dr. Azikiwe's assertion that the bankruptcy of a bank is purely theoretical—receives further support from an informative leaflet sent round by the G.P.O. with its telephone bills. This points out that the subscriber has really no ground for complaint about the increased charges, because his allowance of free local calls remains at fifty units, "but the value is increased from 8s. 4d. to 10s. 5d. in consequence of the increase in the unit call charge to 2½d."

Atom Setback Shock

THOSE who despair of ever keeping pace with America may get a grain of



comfort from a *New Yorker* advertisement headlined "Modern Day Miracle" and offering, at \$22.95 the pair, "Authentic, colonial, solid brass kerosene oil lamps that have not been converted to electricity."

Fierce Light that Beats

Now that the Cabinet-making sensation is over and the Downing Street crowds have dwindled to the usual handful of mooning loafers, a tribute should be paid to the newspaper reporters who worked so hard to keep public interest at fever pitch when there was nothing to report except a shuttling

of Departmental limousines to and from No. 10. It could have been no picnic for them, spinning five hundred words out of the news that Mr. Lennox-Boyd's overcoat was only fastened on one button, or the left-hand lens of Sir Walter Monckton's spectacles misted near the nose. In so rich a feast of journalism at its best it would be invidious to name the winning dish, but *The Star* certainly came high when it reported:

"Mr. Macmillan smoked a cigarette as he drove back from Buckingham Palace and he held it in his hand as he got out of his car."

Got Our Pride

AN economic survey points out that Government policy of ruthless cuts in defence expenditure will still permit us to go on making, testing and stockpiling hydrogen-bombs, though only in sufficient quantity to prevent our "being reduced militarily to the status of a U.S. satellite." This should ensure that, whatever nuclear activity may develop at any future time, we can at any rate save our faces.

Cheques Taken

NEWS that London Transport Executive buses are to be fitted with an automatic clutch has left passengers



unmoved. It just seems an obvious lining up with the L.T.E. fares policy.

Doctor at Bay

WITH the leading articles and the television discussions still dishing up home politics in liberal doses, Ministers outlining their plans at the drop of a hat, and more excitement promised with

by-elections pending at Bristol West, Newcastle-upon-Tyne North, Warwick and Leamington, Beckenham, Carmarthen, Lewisham North and Wednesbury, it must irk politicians to know that all eyes are on Eastbourne.

See What's Cooking

ANYONE who thought that the competitive spirit was confined to athletics, motor racing and railway gardens had a shock on learning from *The Accountant* that a thousand firms are in the running



for that magazine's annual award for "the best set of company accounts of the year." It would have been less surprising to learn of a competition for the cleverest.

Podium Odium?

HIDEBOUND critics are said to be sullen and suspicious at the announcement that two of next month's Festival Hall concerts will have women conductors. But it worked all right with the buses.

Glazed Look

THE shock sustained by readers last week when the ominous phrase "plastic viewer" sprang out at them from a front page passed almost at once when they learnt that it only referred to a sort of pocket peepshow on exhibition at Harrogate's toy fair. Nevertheless, the train of thought is still nosing dimly around in the recesses of more serious minds, and with it the jumpy feeling that the words may re-appear any day now and mean just that.

Speidel

I WENT into the Ops Room for a dekkio at the maps,
The GIII (Ops) 'e up an' says "A ruddy German, chaps!
Aw gee! *Morbleu!* Not good enough!"
So biddin' 'em good-bye
I 'ops it back to Bonn again an' to myself says I:
Oh, it's Jerry this, an' Jerry that, an' "Jerry keep your place";
But it's "Lead the troops o' NATO" when Khrushchev shoots off 'is face.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING ERNIE

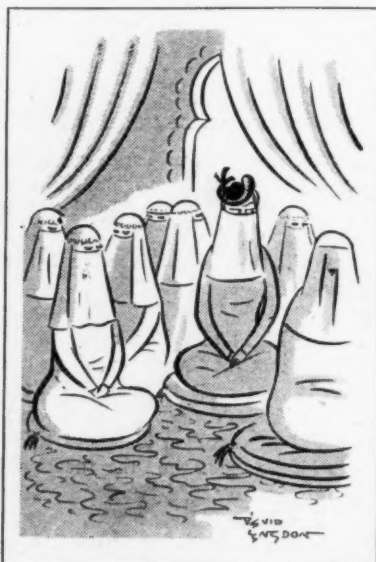
PROPAGANDIST hacks and smear-merchants have sought to exploit the very natural public disappointment over the fact that the name of Ernie, the electronic brain at present nominally engaged in sorting out the Premium Bonds, has not appeared in the list of Mr. Macmillan's "new look" Cabinet.

And the Opposition is already launching a whispering campaign to suggest that by her failure to consult Ernie before the new Government was formed Her Majesty was in some way infringing British constitutional practice.

Such criticisms are wide of the mark. That there should have been some uneasiness at the possibility that the petty jealousies of statesmen and politicians, intent on their own security, might be confining Ernie to the relatively minor matter of the Bonds, was justifiable and wholesome.

But the statement issued yesterday shows these anxieties to be baseless.

It is now disclosed that as early as November of last year Ernie was engaged in working out the New Year Honours List. It had been estimated that to ensure punctual production of a list consisting of an adequate number of individuals universally acclaimed for their selfless dedication to the public interest, moral probity, and intellectual genius, as much as twenty-two thousand man-hours would be required.



Ernie did the job in twenty-one minutes.

But this, it is now revealed, was merely an experiment. And as a result of its unqualified success Mr. Macmillan immediately decided to send Ernie, as a next step, to take charge of the Foreign Office.

And to those faint-hearts who so continuously attempt to proclaim Britain a second-class Power it will have come as a healthy shock to note that within a few hours of this decision Mr. Dulles and Mr. Shepilov were superseded by Sam and Ivan.

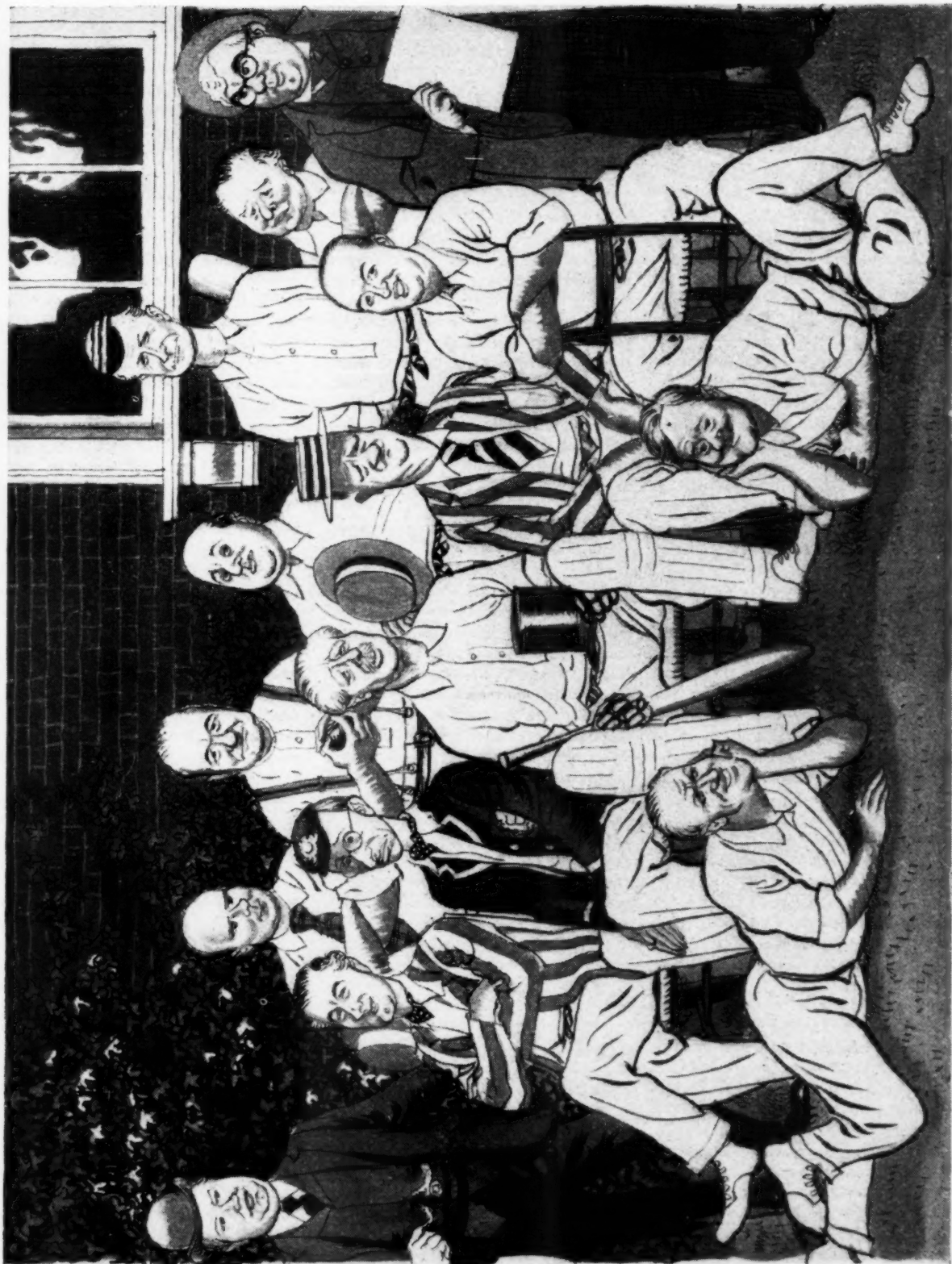
Nor is the matter to be allowed to rest there. Ernie, after a few days at the Foreign Office, is to take over successively the Treasury, the Board of Trade, the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Power. After that, with the full agreement of Lord Salisbury, President Eisenhower, and the Amalgamated Engineering Union, Ernie will move into complete control at Number 10.

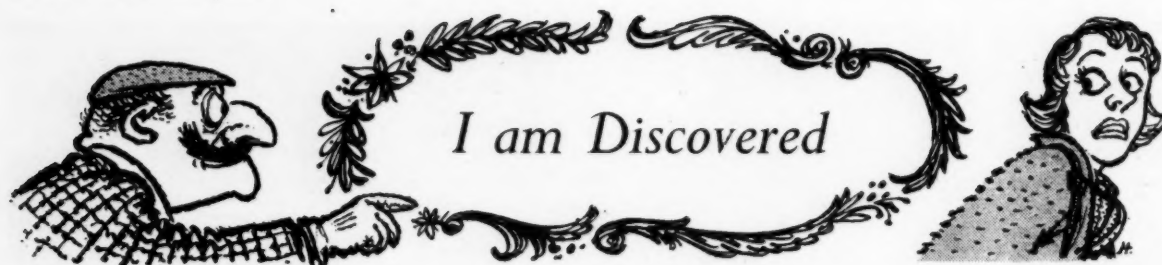
This is splendid news. And more reassuring still is the guarantee, given yesterday by Opposition Leaders speaking from Connecticut, South California and the Yemen, that in the event of a General Election there is no intention on their part to interfere with Ernie's functions as Prime Minister and head of all Government departments. Thus stable Government and—as a friend of Ernie remarked yesterday—"a series of policies which at least look as though they made sense" are assured.

The fear has been expressed that all this may result in some loss of the pageantry and colour brought into public life by such men as Mr. Macmillan, Mr. Butler, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd and Mr. Thorneycroft. These fears may be set at rest.

The supposed, or human, Foreign Secretary, for example, will continue to fly, drive and walk about the place as before. He may even have more time to devote to the press photographers. And all the time both he and we may be confident that, should there be a note to write, a forthright statement of Britain's claim to moral Leadership to be made, a request for a quick loan of a couple of billion to be put in the post, Ernie will be right in there pitching.

C. C.





SUCH an extraordinary thing happened to-day. I was standing in Bond Street looking into Fenwicks' windows (actually I had just imagined myself into one of those bulk-at-the-top tube tunics and was about to superimpose a dear little red turban from the side window) when someone tapped me on the shoulder from behind. It was a pale tubular man with a Jimmy Edwards moustache that looked just as good from the back as the front and a modified Edwardian suit in a large check. I was feeling rather thrilled to be picked up (it's the first time actually) and was wondering how to escape without being rude when I noticed there was a woman with him. She was middle-aged (Margot Fonteyn type blown up a bit) and very smart (she was really wearing a bulk-at-the-top tube tunic and a dear little red turban), and as she looked at me her eyes got larger and larger and her eyelashes flapped up and down as if she had just seen a vision that was too dazzling to contemplate. That was me, I suppose.

"But she's Philippa to the life... five years ago," she crooned.

"And without that nose," said the man.

"And with a *skin* instead of a hide," she almost whispered.

"Madam," said the man with a deep bow, "I'm Mr. Pocton, *Fable's* photographer." (I noticed for the first time that what I had taken for binoculars was a camera.)

"We're looking for a new model, somebody no one else has *touched*, for a feature on fashions for the young. Would you care to come to *Fable* studios at 10.30 to-morrow morning for a camera test? We're really quite nice, you know," and he made his moustache jump in a most peculiar way and was swallowed up by a taxi that must have been waiting all along, I suppose.

I feel so excited about my new career

that I have made a vow that this time I really *will* keep a diary. Wonder what Douglas will say.

January 1.—Went to the address in Greek Street the *Fable* photographer had given me wearing my new black suit, high heels (agonizing) and Mummy's last year's hat but one. Had to push past a lot of unmentionable dust-bins to get to lift and got out opposite a battered door marked

S. LAZARUS
FANCY GOODS
THIS WAY PLEASE

Quickly got back into lift as Mr. Lazarus emerged, his nose to the wind, and pressed another button. It was right this time. In an instant I was transported to a scented bower of roses. There were roses the size of pumpkins all over the wallpaper, roses sprouted from a cornucopia held by a painted wooden negro (rather beastly, I thought) by the door, and the receptionist wore a rose-pink cardigan and a single strand of real pearls (they must have been real or she would have worn more than one strand). Anyway, she was talking to somebody on the phone about how rotten the hunting had been last weekend. She didn't stop phoning when I asked her where Mr. Pocton's studio was, but pointed to a door with her gold (real, of course) propelling pencil. I felt sure she could tell I wasn't used to wearing high heels and that she'd guessed about the hat being Mummy's.

Well, I had a rude surprise when I opened that door because the roses stopped abruptly and a smell of fish glue overpowered Chanel's "Numéro Cinq." There was a long passage and another row of dust-bins. It reminded me of that church in Alsace we saw last hols. Half the village was Roman Catholic and half Protestant, so the R.C.s had the chancel all pink and gold and plaster Madonnas and the Luther-

ans the aisle with grey benches and walls. The Lutherans were supposed to draw a grey curtain across the jolly part for their services, but they never did. Well, after traversing some miles of spinach-coloured linoleum and having questioned several white-coated men who kept disappearing into dark cupboards in the wall, the passage ended in a huge dazzling white studio. It was absolutely empty (of human beings, I mean) but I guessed somebody must have been in it this morning because "Music While You Work" was emerging very softly from behind some rolls of silver paper in the far corner and there was an erection like telegraph wires with bunches of violets glued to them in the middle of the room. Also a bust of Aphrodite with Mr. Pocton's cloth cap (I would recognize it anywhere) worn back to front. A telephone was ringing—I heard it all the time I was coming along the spinach-green corridor actually—so I thought I'd better answer it. It took me a long time to find it, but eventually it turned up behind an opera hat and a box marked "Urgent. These shoes *must* be returned to Mr. Belle by Oct. 27 in time for the Opening." When I lifted the receiver a woman's sharp voice said "Pox, what the hell am I supposed to do with three panther cubs and a samovar?" I said that I wasn't Pox and the voice said a word the boys in the village taught me and rang off. It *sounded* like old Fonteyn.

Well, I wandered round the room a few times looking at things. I tried on the shoes that had missed Mr. Belle's opening. Jolly bad luck for Mr. Belle because they really were gorgeous, what last month's *Fable* called "a mere nothingness of a shoe—the bare-foot look for 1957." Just a string of pearls attached to a sole. I couldn't walk in them but I'm sure I shall learn. I also found a filing cabinet *full* of artificial jewellery—huge chunky pieces like we hired from Robinson's for Richard II

when I was Bagot. I had just clamped on three massive slave bangles, one on each wrist and one round my ankle, when a young man came in and started clipping staples into the floor to hold down some huge sheets of white paper. I must have looked awfully silly, but he didn't seem to have noticed I was there. I said "Excuse me, do you know where Mr. Pocton is?" He didn't look round but he said "*Him*. Sleeping off last night, I should think." He then pencilled a moustache on Aphrodite (I must say I had been itching to do it myself) and went out. I had just got the slave bangle off my ankle (for a ghastly moment I thought it was stuck) when the phone rang again and the Fonteyn voice said "There's a bloody falcon arrived now and the man from Harrods says we're not to take its hood off as it has a taste for human flesh." She used

another really very rude word and rang off. They must have been having quite a party wherever she was.

Mrs. Dale's Diary was now starting in the corner: "... and so I suggested this to Bob... Mother..." It sounded so comfortable and ordinary and I suddenly wished Mummy were there. I looked around for something to sit on and found a sawn-off Grecian column painted white. There was a shelf full of books, but when I tried to pull one out I found it was just the backs of covers stuck on to a board. Almost immediately the phone rang again and the voice said "And a Looee Cans clock," but before it could get the rude word out I explained who I was and what had happened. The voice immediately liquefied. "Oh, you poor little darling," it crooned. "Have you been waiting there all the time?" There was a

crackling noise and somebody whispered something about a hell-begotten fowl. The voice continued "There's been a rush retake on 'Week-ends in the Shires' and Mr. Pocton won't have any time for you, I'm afraid. I really am most appallingly sorry, darling. Actually I've a perfectly *revolting* feeling that Pox is sulking after the showdown last night and isn't coming in at all. You'd better go home, precious, and ring again to-morrow."

What a disappointment!

I got down the green corridor and past the empress in the rose bower as fast as I could. I noticed that her eyes were glued to my retreating posterior. When I got into the lift I discovered that the sawn-off pillar had left a big white patch the shape of a cogwheel on my bottom.

SUSAN CHITTY



Drunk as a Gayelord

By PAUL DEHN

THAT indefatigable dietician, Dr. Gayelord Hauser, has discovered a cure for my insomnia. He calls it MIXING A MENTAL COCKTAIL.

"This cocktail," he writes, "is not to be drunk from a glass but taken in through the mind, for its ingredients come from the distilled essences of sensory pleasures and happy remembrances." He appends one example of a mental cocktail he mixed for himself while lying sleepless on an hotel bed in Rome:

"For sound I took the soothing theme of the lullaby from the light opera *Erminie*, which I have always loved. For sight I went in memory to my home in New York and from the wall took a Renoir portrait of a very old man sitting outside a rural inn door. For taste I used the remembrance of

tree-ripe peaches. For odour I added a little gardenia from a California garden. And for touch the remembrance of the cool, refreshing waters in which I swam just two days ago—the waters of the Mediterranean.

Slowly, in my mind, I mixed these things . . . Round and round I stirred them, seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling, smelling. The sounds of Rome died away. The draught is a heavy one and potent. Phenobarbital was never like this."

Well, here I am at 2.15 a.m., lying sleepless on a bed in Chelsea; and I must say that the distilled essences of peach, gardenia, sea-water and a very old Frenchman leave me just about as sleepless as I was before. But everyone to his taste. If I am unsedated by Dr. Hauser's cocktail, surely I have the imaginative stamina to sedate myself by mixing one of my own.

Off I go. For sound, I take the plangent glory of Caruso singing "*Vesti La Giubba*." For sight, the sweet innocence of my new, two-day-old god-daughter. For taste, the delicate savour of brains cooked *au beurre noir*. For odour, the tangy fragrance of the wood that lines my silver cigar-box. And for touch, the feel of fine sand trickling through the fingers.

Slowly, in my mind, I mix these things. Round and round I stir them till each pleasure and remembrance, designed for the titillation of one sense, begins dreamily to titillate another. I begin to hear my sweet, innocent, two-day-old god-daughter. My eyes are riveted in fascination to the inside of my cigar-box. I am letting sheep's brains trickle slowly through my fingers. My mouth is full of fine sand. And I am smelling Caruso.

Keep at it. Now I am staring at sand, stroking Caruso's brains, letting cigar-boxes trickle generously through my fingers and smelling my sweet, innocent, two-day-old—No! That way madness lies.

It is ten to three and, for some odd reason, I am still wide awake. Shall we try again?

For sound I take the crisp, soothing, monotonous rhythm of marching feet. For sight, the glow of a merry coal-fire. For taste, the breast of a tenderly-boiled chicken. For odour, the fragrance of new-mown hay. And for touch, the

opulent masculinity of good cow-hide leather.

I stir and I stir. Within a minute my imagination's ears are alert to the mooing of cows. My hands have been reduced to two scorched and reeking stumps through stroking, over-ecstatically, the red-hot coals of my merry fire. I see a hen in my bed, and I am smelling feet—marching ones, at that.

Don't give up now. One last desperate stir and, to the merry crackle of red-hot hay, I am stroking boiled breasts, inspecting feet, smelling cows and swallowing coal.

I am also going downstairs at 4.35 in the morning to mix myself a really zonking Martini.

Mary Malcolm

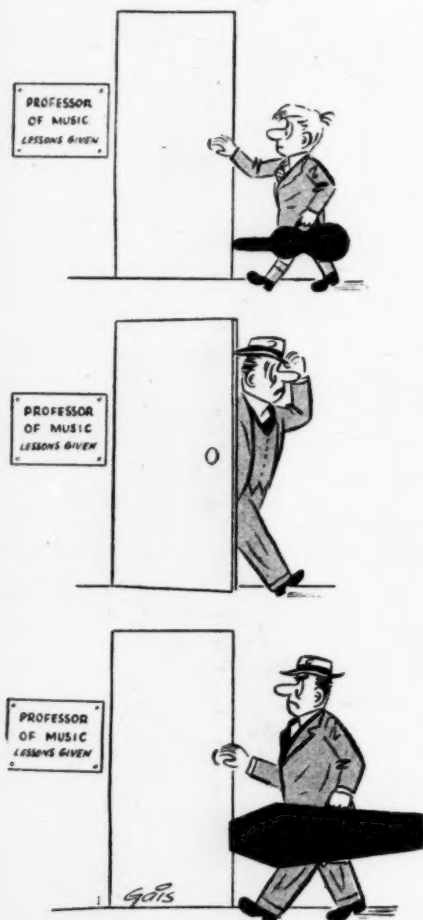
Robert Burns laments the departure from the B.B.C. of his favourite television announcer.

O MARY, at thy window be,
It is the wish'd, the trysted hour!
Those smiles and glances let me see
That melt the heart o' ilka viewer:
Programmes gey dreich wad I endure—
E'en gie "The Groves" a welcome—
Could I a single glimpse secure
O' lovely Mary Malcolm.

How oft before the shimmering screen
My evening hours have slipped awa';
Wi' glamour-puss and beauty-queen
I sat, but neither heard nor saw:
Tho' this was fair, and that was braw
(When dusted o'er wi' talcum)
I sigh'd, and said amang them a'
"Ye are na Mary Malcolm."

O Mary, canst thou wreck his peace
Wha for thee pays his licence fee?
Or canst thou break that heart of his,
Forsaking thus the B.B.C.?
O bide a while till I.T.V.
Shall come, as soon it *shall* come,
To Scotia, bringing with it thee,
The lovely Mary Malcolm.

E. V. MILNER



Unposted Letters of a Rising Politician

Friday, January 11th

MY dear Prime Minister,—Just a line to confirm in writing my willingness, already given to you verbally, to accept the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

As you know, I have for a long time taken a particular interest in our relations with foreign powers. I have travelled extensively, and am seldom at a loss (I think I may claim) for something to say when stepping out of aeroplanes. I look forward therefore with confidence to a happy partnership in what I am sure will prove to be the Government England and the world are looking for. At any rate you may rely upon me to do my best to justify the many kind things you said about me this morning.

I do hope you will be able to find some suitable consolation prize for poor Selwyn!

Friday, January 11th (later)

My dear Prime Minister,—Something you said to me at our meeting this afternoon made me fear you might think I was disappointed that you found yourself unable to offer me the Foreign Office. On the contrary, I was overjoyed, as I hope I made clear at the time, to be asked to become your first Minister of Education.

It is a great opportunity. The future of our country rests, after all, with the young people, and I can conceive of no task more worthwhile or more important than to be responsible at the summit for bringing them along in the way that they should go. Education, particularly at schools and universities, has always, as you know, been very close to my heart; and that is what, if you agree, I propose to say to the TV interviewer who will I suppose (alas! but inevitably) soon be knocking at my door.

I am sure you did the only possible thing in keeping Selwyn at the post with which he has for so many months been making himself familiar.

Friday, January 11th (later still)

My dear Prime Minister,—Late though it is, I feel my first task as your new Minister must be to express in writing the gratitude I tried to convey to you in words at our meeting a bare

half-hour ago. I suppose if anyone had asked me, before you sent for me, what three facets of our national life I considered to be, at the present juncture, of supreme significance for our survival, I should have answered Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, in that order. Now you have entrusted me with all three.

If there is anything else I can do to help, please do not hesitate to let me know.

Saturday, January 12th

My dear Prime Minister,—As Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster—

My dear Prime Minister,—The

heavy burden of Transport and Civil Aviation—

My dear Prime Minister,—Reluctant though I am to trouble you at a time when I know you have many important details still to settle and many callers to see (some of whom, I understand, have already been twice), I feel I owe it to our long friendship to remind you that Housing and, by a coincidence, Local Government are subjects to which throughout my twenty-eight years in Parliament I have devoted special attention. The vexed question of the proposed new roadway through Christ Church Meadows, in particular, has never been far from my thoughts.



David Sadon

"Now for 64,000—name all the members of the Cabinet."



Though I have for some time been desirous, as you know, to have more time to devote to my private affairs, the call of duty must as ever come first.

If therefore—

Sunday, January 13th. 6.30 p.m.

My dear Prime Minister,—I know you will not mind my presuming on a friendship that goes back to the Boer War to the extent of requesting you not to consider my name for a full Cabinet post. I am still, I think I may say, a comparatively young man, and it may help you in the final stages of reconstructing your Cabinet to be assured that I would not like to stand in the way of others whose last chance of reaching the top this may well be.

Upon my full assistance in any other way you may of course, as always, count in full measure.

Monday, January 14th

My dear Prime Minister,—I have been out of town for a few days and send you this note, first, to congratulate you on the splendid team that you have so far got together and, second, to let you know that I am back, in case I can be of use to you in any way at this testing time.

You will now be exercised, I expect, chiefly about the Admiralty, which must continue to be, as it has always been in our long history, the corner-stone of national security. More than ever, at this present time when the dictates of financial stringency necessitate further reductions in Service expenditure, we shall need (or so it seems to me, old

friend) a man of exceptional courage, ingenuity and technical "know-how" to forge a powerful and flexible naval weapon from our limited resources. Upon whomever your choice falls, I trust he will lose no time in scrapping the old *Diamonds*, which to my mind are seriously undergunned, and will get ahead with the fitting of the modified American-type detector (the S. 68) to *Belisarius* and *Regent*. The vital conversion programme for *Arethusa* is also—but I must not bore you, at a very busy time, with the details of what, as you may not know, has been my lifelong passion.

Thursday, January 17th

My dear Prime Minister,—How time flies! Already a week has passed

since, to my great delight, you acceded to the great office for which your character, talents and achievements have long marked you out. I only wish that I had had an opportunity to congratulate you in person during the past few days, but I have been most anxious, by not intruding upon you in any way, to give you ample room for manœuvre.

I have never, as you know, had any desire to be a figure-head, and I am most grateful to you for so scrupulously observing my wishes in this matter during an eventful week. If, however, there is any really effective way in which I can help to lighten your burden—perhaps in a junior capacity at the Treasury?—you may be assured that I shall let no personal considerations stand in the way.

Monday, January 21st

My dear Prime Minister,—In case you have been thinking of completing your list of Ministerial and other appointments by offering me the post of Joint Under-Secretary for Part of Flint, I must tell you that I should not, at the end of what has been a very long friendship, feel justified in accepting the reappointment. At fifty-five I am now within a few years of the age at which, on all the evidence, a man's judgment, sense of loyalty, and power of decision begin sensibly to decay.

Please do not trouble to thank me for the generous terms in which, as you know, I should have liked to write to you. Yours ever, H. F. ELLIS.

"Let us Now Praise . . ."

AS back and forth to Number Ten
Went all those smiling gentlemen
A hundred shutters clicked, and then . . .

Obscurity descends.
For half a week we have them pat,
Identify each nose and hat,
But what's their prospect after that?
It all depends.

From outer darkness Aubrey Jones
(E.g.) spoke up in ringing tones—
To Suez, everybody owns,

He owed his brief réclame;
If Egypt hadn't cut up rough
And U.S. oilmen done their stuff
Should we have known him well enough
To care a damn?

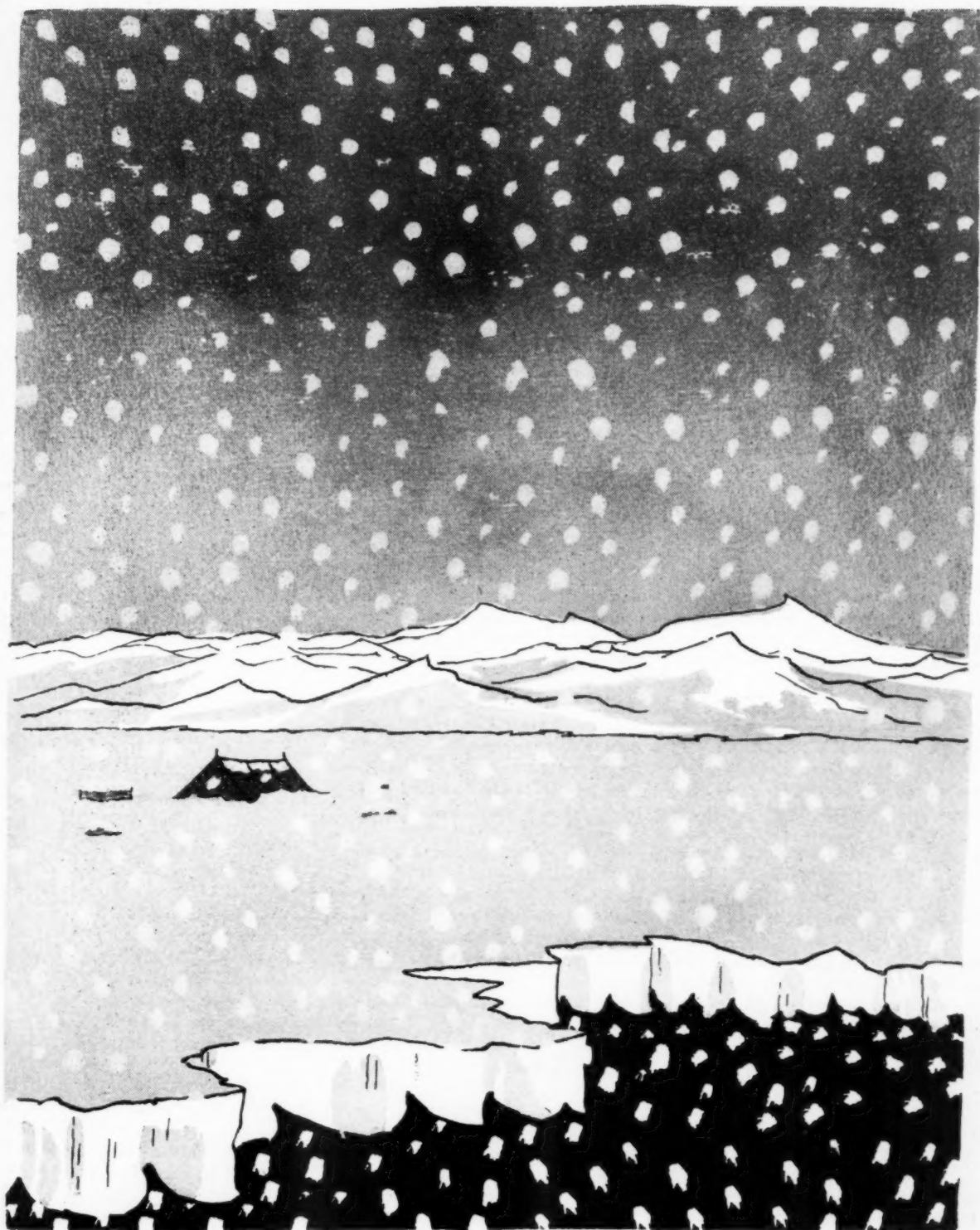
In Parliamentary affairs
Illustriousness hangs on hairs
As now each Minister prepares

To come to grips with duty:
Rab Butler needs a master crook;
A Rents revolt means fame for Brooke;
A teachers' strike is Hailsham's hook
To land a beauty.

For if no crisis rears its head,
No wars or slumps or queues for bread,
They really might as well be dead

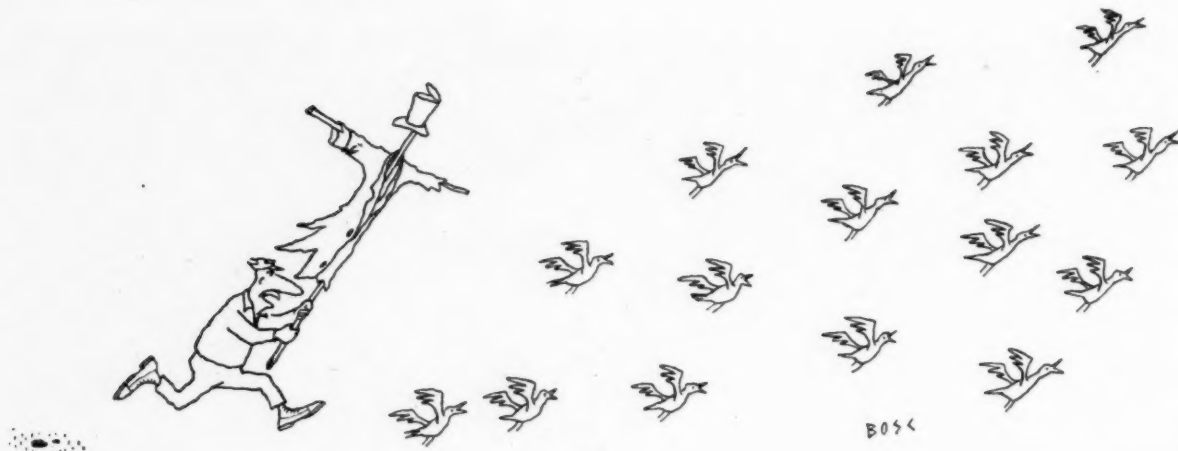
For all their hope of fame;
It pays each Minister to keep
His cauldron boiling, thus to reap
A front-page headline, inches deep,
Crying his name.

J. B. BOOTHROYD



Hollowood

"All right then—Bailey back at No. 6 for his nuisance value."



What it Means

By CLAUD COCKBURN

DARK-visaged, enigmatic, Tjeeriby-phar-Gnow, the man right behind the Lebanese Left-Wing Army clique, which stands or falls on a policy of progressive-Conservative Jordanism, is the first spokesman of Middle Eastern public opinion to state that he—to the best of his knowledge and belief—"understands" the Eisenhower "Plan."

"T.B.G."—as he is cheerily hailed by the lads in the U.N. bar—is well known to western readers as author of *Seven Years in a Power Vacuum*, which is certainly the finest thing of its kind since *Four Thousand Years in Tibet*, by the Dalai Lama, *My Trip to Leigh-Fermor*, by W. Moss, and the perennially popular *Round the Bend in Twenty Winks*, by that perennially popular Dubliner with the golden voice, Con Teeky.

"The only thing I don't understand about the Eisenhower Plan," said the distinguished Lebanese N.C.O., addressing a meeting of distinguished Oil-Thinkers, political Mind-Readers and Gas-meter Readers at the Vacuum-Cleaners' Convention at London, Texas, "is why anyone at any time has not understood the Eisenhower Plan."

"How clear is it to you?" queried a reporter for the Nasser-controlled *Voice of Aden*, which is believed to be behind the raids on the Northern Ireland border.

"Crystal," replied the perennial Oriental.

"Howja mean 'Crystal'?" shouted

the representative of the London (England) *Times*, which is believed to be behind the raids on the Buckingham Palace border.

"Clear," vouchsafed the imperturbable mid-Easterner, moving quickly behind the Standard Oil Company.

The Minority Leader of the Democratic Majority then stated that, as of the day after to-morrow, he intended to swing his support to all measures short of peace which might be proposed by the President, provided—at this point, amid deafening cheers, he waved a battered proviso which once hung on the wall of his mother's log cabin near Standard Oil, New Jersey—such measures be not regarded as conducive to anything not entirely nice.

"Very, very nice," was the whispered comment of a Saudi Arabian who, while waiting to get behind the Yemen, had got behind the wheel of a gold-plated Cadillac.

"What we have here," said the Majority Leader of the Republican Minority, "is a situation. I want it to be known and understood on every golf-course in the world where the principles of freedom are still understood, that our attitude to Egypt does not differ by an iota from our attitude to anything else, and on that basis we shall act, and act with an energy which may yet give pause to the advocates of Communist Colonialism. Macmillan's the boy, or is he?"

This statement, taken as an interim

redefinition of probable American policies *vis-à-vis* the Gaza Strip—a man who made a "joke" in poor taste about "strip poker" was asked to leave the Middle East immediately—met with mixed reactions in Cairo, Dulwich and Tel-Aviv. Accused of foul language in the presence of Krishna Menon (the man believed to be behind schedule), the all-powerful leader of the Egyptian Corporals' Union said that he had intended to prefix his ugly oath with the word "Assouan." It had, he said, "gotten to be quite a habit with me. Tell me Assouan and I say damn. Well, after all, damn it all."

Mr. Nehru, speaking from Capetown, where he had stopped to have a word with Mr. Strydom about a word he had had with Chou-en-Lai, the Governor-General of Canada and the man behind Colonel Serraj, said that in his view the Eisenhower Plan should be treated "on its merits." Asked for a list of merits he said "Never the twain shall meet." Captain Peter Townsend—said to be responsible for crossing the Chinese border in a Landrover—said "Mr. Chou and I hope to be just very good friends." In reply to a question he said "I deny that I am behind schedule. That sort of thing is the type of Communist propaganda which has done so much harm to the British motor industry."

Mr. Khrushchev, speaking at a meeting of the neo-Ugbeq neo-Stalinists, said that if Sir Compton Mackenzie could say a good word for whisky, what

was to prevent him, Khrushchev, saying several good words for vodka? As he saw it, the thing was a neo-imperialist plot, and, furthermore, he would say it again if the man from *The Times* would remind him of what it was he had sought to say in the first place.

Meantime, a man who for years shared "digs" just behind the State Department with Walter (as he then was) Lippman, was in a position to make a statement on the Eisenhower Plan so definite that it had to be suppressed for security reasons. So grave—in their implications for the future of the golf-loving world—were the explanations involved, they were given only to Senators, Congressmen, newspaper correspondents, and the representatives of foreign Embassies and Legations.

It thus became (crystal) clear that there will be no advance without security, that nice people will get nice money, that the British can go fry an egg, and that Dulles, with a detachment of U.S. Marines assembled in the interests of progress, will personally conduct conversations with the man behind Mr. Macmillan and Colonel Serraj, who will be behind a smoke-screen.

Furthermore, there will be irrigation, and plenty of it, for the right type of man.

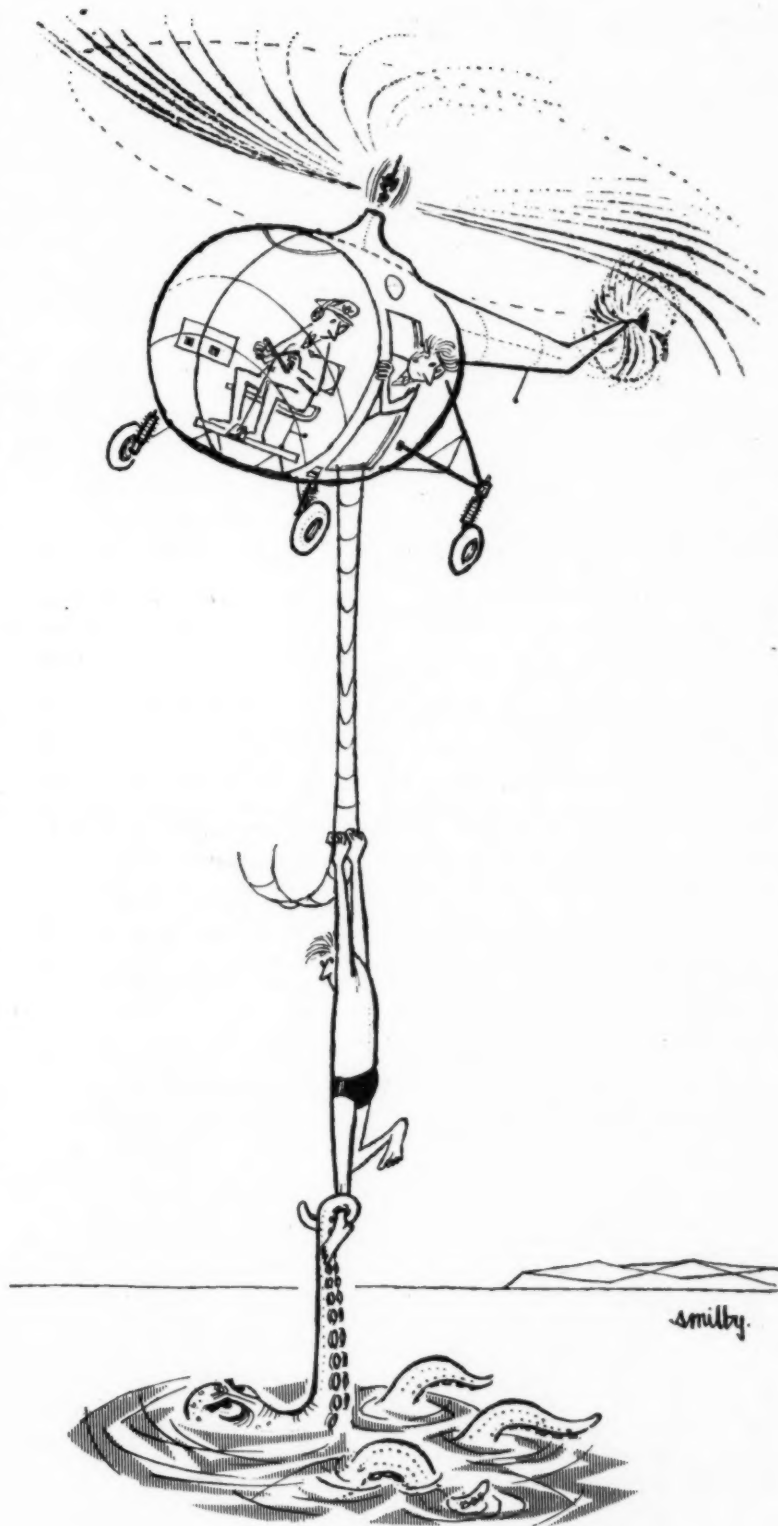
The wrong type of man—as it might be an Englishman, Russian, or Frog—will be treated with that matchless combination of courtesy and frankness which has done so much to keep the worst of them behind the Elbe, the Curtain and—in certain cases—bars.

It is not too much to say that a turning point has been reached in the affairs of the Middle East. They are having a wonderful time and wish we were there.

"Well, what would you do chums if you found yourselves in a city where there was a super-abundance of nightlife—costing little (some of it at any rate) and lasting long—and all of it so spontaneously gay and light-hearted, so free from 'blue' jokes and suggestive antics that you could quite happily take your maiden aunt there? . . . What in fact would you do if you found yourself in the enchanting city of Copenhagen? . . . You'd do what I'm doing . . . You'd get up late and stay up late no doubt. (And just to put your minds at rest, I haven't got my maiden aunt with me) . . ."

Veronica Papworth in The Star

It doesn't put our minds at rest.



America Day by Day

By P. G. WODEHOUSE

THERE is so much hot news this week that really one hardly knows where to start. Here are some of the happenings which have rocked America to its foundations of late. Vera-Ellen, the movie star, is eliminating the hyphen and has announced that from now on she wishes to be known as Vera Ellen. The anniversary of this event will be celebrated officially each year as V E Day.

Vanessa Brown, another movie star, has separated from her husband, Doctor Robert Franklyn, and is remaining in the home while he has gone to an hotel, thus giving once for all the answer to the question "Is there a doctor in the house?" And in Greenwich, Connecticut, Mrs. Catherine B. Wood, returning to 6 Peters Road the other day after doing some shopping, was surprised to note that her little nest had been stripped of all its pictures, furniture and wall-paper, which she found neatly piled on the back porch. It transpired that Mr. Harry Scholfield, a local contractor, had sent Matthew Brennan, an operative in his employ, to rip the stuffing out of 6 Linwood Road, and Mr. Brennan, interviewed, said he had "become confused."

Watching television the other night I was well rewarded for my pains. There appeared on the screen, demonstrating a mattress, a well-upholstered young woman who was introduced to the viewing millions as Miss Foam Bedding of 1957, and we were all sorry we had missed Miss Foam Bedding of 1956.

It is, of course, virtually impossible in America nowadays for a girl not to be Miss something. A friend of a friend of mine is acquainted with a lady who has the job of putting imitation orange pips into tinned orange juice in order to create the illusion that the beverage has been freshly squeezed from the parent fruit. She is expecting daily to become Miss Ersatz Orange Pip of 1957.

What with all these crises and what not the news that Wayburn Mace, aged six, of Long Beach, California, has been given a flashlight will probably have escaped the notice of the British public, but it is going to mean a lot to Mr. Mace senior and the residents of Long Beach, for life for them should from now on become much more tranquil. It seems that Junior, suspecting the presence under his bed of hostile Red Indians, went after them with a lighted candle, and the subsequent activities of the local fire brigade blocked traffic on all roads leading to the Mace home for several hours. Popular sympathy is with the little fellow. Nothing is more annoying than to have Red Indians under your bed, and it is felt that he is not to be blamed for having taken a firm line with them.

It is so long since I have been in New York that I have not actually established personal contact with Lively Louie, but they tell me he is fitting nicely into metropolitan life. Lively Louie is the new Talking Litter Basket. You are sauntering along Fifth Avenue, thinking of this and that, and suddenly the litter

basket on the corner asks you not to drop that bit of paper on the pavement but to place it in the receptacle designed for it by the Citizens Committee To Keep New York City Clean. According to the journal to which I subscribe, the trash can, as it is called, "coaxes and cajoles." This is reassuring news. I would always myself prefer one of those strong silent trash cans which keep themselves to themselves, but it is obviously much nicer, if a trash can has to get into conversation with you, to have it say "No, old man, not on the pavement, Bung it in here, if you don't mind. Thanks most awfully," and not something out of the side of its mouth beginning with "Hey, you!"

About James E. Glover of Hackettstown, N.J., I don't quite know what to say. Up to a certain point his seems a story with a happy ending, for he is having his beard clipped off with an electric razor during a forthcoming television commercial to be broadcast nationally, and of course with every beard that is expunged this becomes a sweeter and happier world. It is pleasant, too, to hear that Mr. Glover will be paid \$5000 per ounce of shorn hair and that good beard-judges estimate that his should pan out at about half an ounce, so that he is pretty sure to have at least \$2500 in the old hip pocket when he emerges from the studio looking respectable for the first time since September, 1955, when he began growing what is described as the "General Grant type."

What gives one pause and makes one shake the head is his statement to the Press that as soon as this beard is safely out of the way he plans to start another.

"Beards," he said, "are great, and I'm getting mine back as fast as it will sprout. I hope all this will start a national trend in beard-growing."

This seems to me so subversive that I think the F.B.I. ought to look into it.

Headline from a morning paper:

COMPLAINS BLONDE STOLE IN
WOKE HIM AT DEAD OF NIGHT

"Complains" is the operative word. Some men will grumble about anything.





The Hon. Sales Girl

THE peerage to-day is in a bad way, poor daddy is taxed to the hilt,
And cannot afford to live like a lord in the castle our ancestors built.
To earn a few bob I am doing a job, when other engagements permit;
The money is not a terrible lot, so daddy still helps me a bit.
But I save him no end as I'd probably spend much more if I hadn't a job
And the wages I get are not taxable yet; every shilling tax free is a bob.

*Standing in a shop all day,
Dancing half the night,
Helps to pass the time away
And keep the young things bright.*

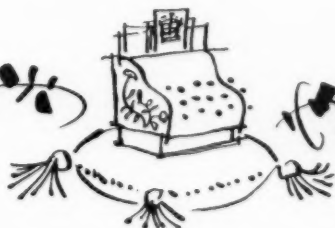
The manager says I'm remarkably good, though daddy is not on the board;
By taking on debts instead of the plebs he finds that the profits have soared.
We bring a lot more people into the store who might never have heard of it yet
If the sales girls hadn't got families with a page and a half in *Debrett*.
And those who look round have frequently found that the honourable shop
assistants
Are keen and resourceful, persuasive and forceful in breaking down sales
resistance.

*Standing in a shop all day
Selling on commission
Helps to keep the wolf away
From the doors of a patrician.*

It is fun and I find it broadens the mind and makes me feel useful and good.
I'm helping dear daddy in difficult times as a dutiful daughter should
But if I'm to stay till my hair has turned grey, the job will undoubtedly bore me
And I must take my place at the head of my race as my ancestors had to before me
As the wife of a peer who sells petrol or beer or is something to do with
defences
And can really afford to live like a lord on capital gains and expenses.

*Although I like the job I've got,
For girls of my condition
Working in a shop is not
A permanent ambition.*

LEONARD TAYLOR





Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh

*In Shakespeare and Coward and Rattigan, what other stars can give
Such prettily-turned performances as those of Larry and Viv?
But the parts they play with a polish that's almost unmatched in our age
Are Sir Laurence and Lady Olivier, First Lady and Gent of the stage.*







"You rang, sir?"

The Duel

By ANTHONY CARSON

I HAVE never heard of a student of bagpipes, but I suppose such a thing exists, since nearly everybody is a student of something. When I arrived in Galicia I was very surprised to discover that bagpipes formed the greater part of the national music, and decided, with the help of wine, aguardiente, brandy, anis, and extraordinarily cheap champagne cocktails, to make a study of them. The flower of bagpipe time is during the feast of the Apostle in Santiago de Compostella, when groups of players accompanied by a man with a tiny drum march through the streets playing tamed Celtic airs. They are dressed in breeches, red stockings and flutter with ribbons, the great gourd of their pipes slung over their shoulders like a haunch of venison. But it is a sad procession, unwitnessed and unloved, like a robin singing in a cemetery. The people of Santiago are praying or drinking, their great red-haired gods sulking in the mists of the mountains, and nobody gives a damn.

I hadn't been long in Santiago before I met a man called Jonathan Speed. He was a plump man with far-away belligerent eyes who had come to Galicia to study cathedrals. But it was

obvious that he was in search of something else, a private phantom, a strange unedited solution.

One day we heard some bagpipes. They were as wild as wind in the heather, stark with the naked cries of happy murderers in the glens, as Scotch as haggis, or as Irish as promises. "Astounding," said Speed, "to hell with cathedrals and progressive jazz. Let us buy bagpipes."

Somebody told us about a master bagpipe manufacturer called Pablo. He made the bagpipes in front of your very eyes like another man makes hats or cigars. And when he had fluted the bagpipes he put the pipe to his lips and Pan blazed in the shop. Pan, and no other. Wonderful, insuperable, lost Pan. "The very thing," said Speed, and we went to the shop with one of those eternal Spanish friends who hunt for you everything from sardines to saints. There, in a lost street, crumpled with children, we entered a shop sweet with new sharpened wood, the hum of a lathe, and the royal red blaze of the bagpipe blowers. "Make me a bagpipe," said Speed. "And me a bagpipe without the bag," I said. In half an hour the bagpipes were on the counter and in another quarter of an hour I had

a pipe as gay as a tinker's donkey. Speed slung the bag over his shoulder, blew on the pipe, there was a roar like a stuck pig, and a tune came out as brave as a field in May. It was a Northumbrian air, but it made no difference. I blew on my pipe and coughed and blew and rasped and there was nothing but the wind. "Dance," said Speed, so I danced a vague Hibernian dance, and the children scuttled into the shop and Pablo himself raised the fluted pipe to his mouth and the sawdust room was a world of glow-worms. Later we went from feast to feast until one day he suddenly put on a black suit and a Homburg hat and left for England. "My work," he said. Poetry or progressive jazz or cathedrals? I didn't ask him. I am English, but I don't understand the English.

I was alone with the pipe. I started to blow it in my small hotel high up above the Civil Guards, the commercial travellers, the pigs and the hens and the bells. I blew and I blew and not a note came out, just a sound like wind in the wainscoting, like old men coughing over their pipes in a ruined dormitory. I packed my bags, paid my bill and left for the village of Ribeira at the end of a bay and went up into the hills. "Look

out for wolves, eagles and ghosts," said an old female domestic who occasionally threw a bucket of water into the Stone-Age latrine. She told me about an eagle which had killed an elderly councillor in the town hall. "It sat outside the window and stared at him," she said. "He died of fright." They came from Portugal and might be dead relatives.

Up in the hills were wonderful wild flowers and tiny bees so industrious that they made you ashamed. I blew on the pipe and certain notes rang on the air like drowned bells. There are seven apertures on the pipe, unevenly placed, and the fingers have to be as nimble as spiders. Also the breath must flow like

a great slow bellows, and the head hold a discipline of harmony, born and slowly learnt. The first pattern of music was a small broken Moorish melody, it got itself caught in the pipe on its way from Marrakesh or the tinkling markets of Tiznit. I played this tune over and over again and got stung by a bee. This was not what I sought. I craved the lilt of the early Galician days, when Irish giants sat on their thrones and the storytellers sat under the cedars. And at last, among the wild lilies and the heather, a minute gasping melody flowed from the pipe. I do not know how. I don't necessarily believe in inspiration and wouldn't care to state that

there are obvious reasons for everything. We all have the secret ground which is ourselves, and which we hardly care to debate—it runs counter to so many orthodox arguments. For me, writing is a certain craft which matures through repetition, but sometimes, in painting, about which I know nothing, I can capture the whole of a small world in a few seconds.

I repeated this pattern of notes, and lay back on the heather. A seagull floated over my head but did not speak. About ten minutes later I heard a flurry over the grass, a rustling, and a patter of horn and hoof, and looked around. I was surrounded by sheep.

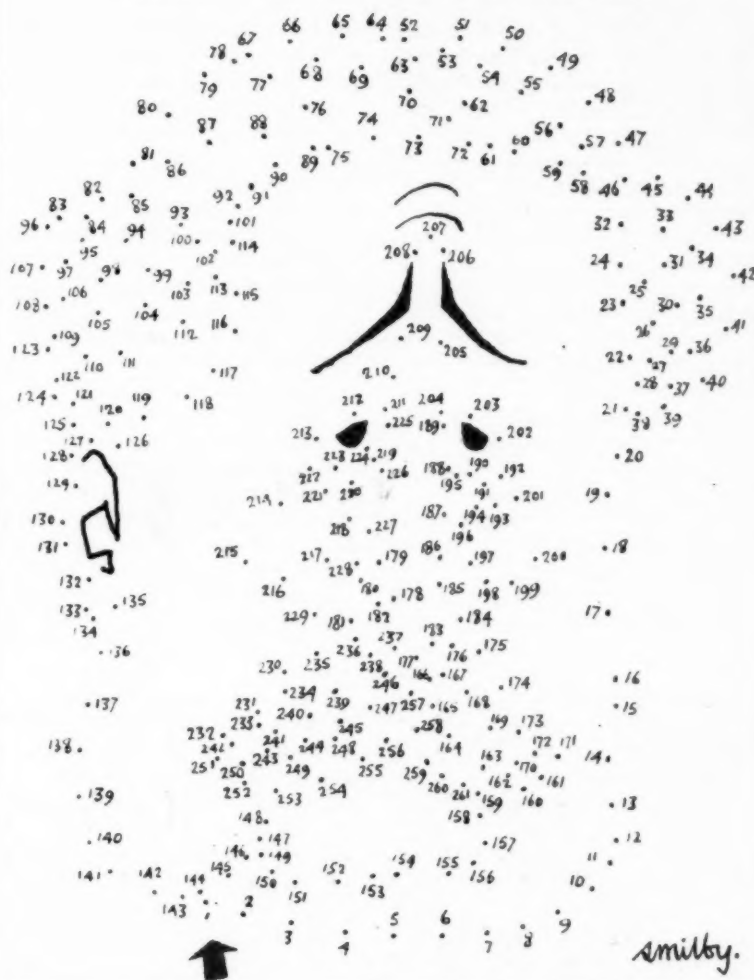


"Don't look so worried, Miss Edwards, they won't bite."

Roughly there must have been about five hundred, which meant a thousand eyes, perplexed, inquiring and cold with the cold doubt of sheep. They stood there, ciphers of wool and mutton, with a blaze in their brains. I have never heard of a man being attacked by sheep, but who could tell? I remembered about the eagles and ghosts and stood up. Far away I could hear a man shouting, and presently saw him, a black figure with a looming face. He was waving a pipe, the same fluted shape as mine, and suddenly he sat down, put it to his lips and blew. There was tremble in the wind, a spell of silver and sunlight, and the sheep teetered on their hooves, flickered their eyes and disappeared. I sat down and looked at the pipe. It held a fascinating power. It was impossible to resist it. I put it to my lips and blew and the notes scampered over the heather like hares on a bright morning. I hadn't long to wait. In another minute the sheep were back, ringing me round with a wild, thin, staring hope. I was the new Messiah of a grassy Salvation. Again I could hear the man shouting, and I got up and walked back to the village, and entered the inn and began drinking at the bar. "A good day?" asked the proprietor, polishing the glasses. "A good day," I said. "I've learnt to play a tune on the bagpipe." "Play it," said the proprietor with a laugh. I lifted the pipe to my lips and the notes fell out of it like dice. "I never heard a tune like that," said the proprietor, filling my glass.

It was about five minutes later that the first of the sheep trotted into the inn.

Draw Your Own Politicians



Song Against Sussex

Sussex, according to Fuller's "Worthies," was chiefly notable for iron, wheatears, carp and talc.

THE great hills of the South Country,
Symbolic by the sea,
They symbolized quite different things
In 1673
For readers of Thomas Fuller's "Worthies"
From what they do for me.

For Arun iron was a great feature
Of Fuller's Sussex earth:
South Country men gorged wheatears then
And grew to Falstaff's girth—
But poems in praise of the South Country
Would have provoked their mirth.

They bred fine carp in the Home Counties,
But better fish did swim
In Sussex: Fuller, describing talc,
Thought Sussex a synonym—
And the men who were babes when he was a babe
Felt bound to agree with him.

If ever I win a football pool
And am rich enough to retire,
I'll buy me a copy of Fuller's "Worthies"
And sit with it over a fire
As far as I can from the Sussex coast,
In a less self-conscious shire.

ANTHONY BRODE

Shouting at Worms

By STELLA GIBBONS

THE thing to do that was least likely to start an argument seemed to be to go down and get a book out about earthworms, which sounds as if it were meant to be funny, which is how truth sometimes does.

Attention had been drawn for some years now to worms while gardening: Did they mind when chopped in half? Were they seeing, in spite of people saying they were blind, when they reared up their snouts—but were they snouts?—to the light? Were they dead from drowning when they lay about like that after heavy rain?

After consultation of Romanes' *Animal Intelligence* interest was carried a stage further by a remark on Page 24, listed in the index as *Worms, apparent intelligence of*: "Mr. Darwin has now in the press a highly interesting work on the habits of earthworms . . . as this work will so shortly be published I shall not forestall any other fact which it has to state . . ."

"Now" must have been 1881, according to the information about Darwin in the encyclopædia, and the work in the press was called *Vegetable Mould and Earth Worms*.

In the library the lights are dim and the dust lies thick and calm, and here is the Darwin book. It is shortish with nice big print and some drawings of

worms' insides and walls and earth casts, and it doesn't look too technical, so let us turn at once to Their Senses.

Of these Darwin says:

"Worms do not possess any sense of hearing. They took not the least notice of the shrill notes from a metal whistle which was repeatedly sounded near them, nor did they of the deepest and loudest notes of a bassoon . . . When placed on a table close to the keys of a piano, which was played as loudly as possible, they remained perfectly quiet."

And again:

"They were indifferent to shouts . . ."

The scene might have been chosen by Mr. Charles Spencelayh; the lofty parlour through whose window streams the mellow and somehow meaningful sun (for this is a turning-point in the history of the earthworm, and all Nature seems to etc., etc.), the Turkey carpet with faithful Tray curled up on that morning's copy of *The Times* ("Home Rule for Ire—" just visible in very black letters near his tail), the linnet in the glittering wire cage with head cocked and eye fixed in wistful yet perky inquiry upon Darwin, the great Interpreter between Man and Brute, as he bends over the table cluttered with various homely and eminently paintable objects, the pale young assistant in frock coat and beard standing by

his side and, coiled on the table itself, some very pink and lovingly-rendered worms in a state of obstinate indifference. In the background, half-guttered candles in the golden holders on a walnut piano with a pleated green silk panel tell us that Darwin and his assistant, Samuel Sufferweed, have been up most of the night playing *The Merry Peasant* under the eyes of Queen Victoria (signed) in a frame surrounded by silver filigree roses.

We can almost hear what they say:

"Come, Sufferweed, it's your turn to blow

the whistle." "Mr. Darwin, that sound will ring in my ear until my dying day, having already blown it some thousand and three times, not counting false starts." "I hope it is not necessary at this stage, Sufferweed, to remind you that it is the fittest who survive, and the fact that you have survived shows you are fitted to blow that whistle." "Don't you think, sir, we might try them again with the Bach while Annie runs us up some breakfast? I can't hold out much longer, really I can't." "Pshaw, man." "I am serious, Mr. Darwin." "Tush!" "Tush to you, and you needn't think that just because I am in a subordinate position in your house you can starve me to death and do me out of my breakfast." "Pooh, what nonsense is this?" "It *isn't* nonsense and I think it's simply *bestly* of you, when I've spent sixteen hours trying to get them to respond." "Don't give me that unscientific line, Sufferweed, as our Yankee cousins would have it; *trying to get* is not what we have been doing, we are *observing*, sirrah, and *recording what we observe*." "Mr. Darwin I must have some BREAKFAST." "SUFFERWEED!"

The filigree roses on the frame of the signed photograph of Queen Victoria tremble at the mutual shouts, and then a silence falls. Both glance at the worms, who remain indifferent. Annie of her own accord brings in a lovely hot breakfast, but somehow they don't want it. Even Sufferweed waves it away. When she has gone they bend excitedly across the table. The filigree roses tremble again.

"Ah!"

"Hi!"

"Ahoj there!"

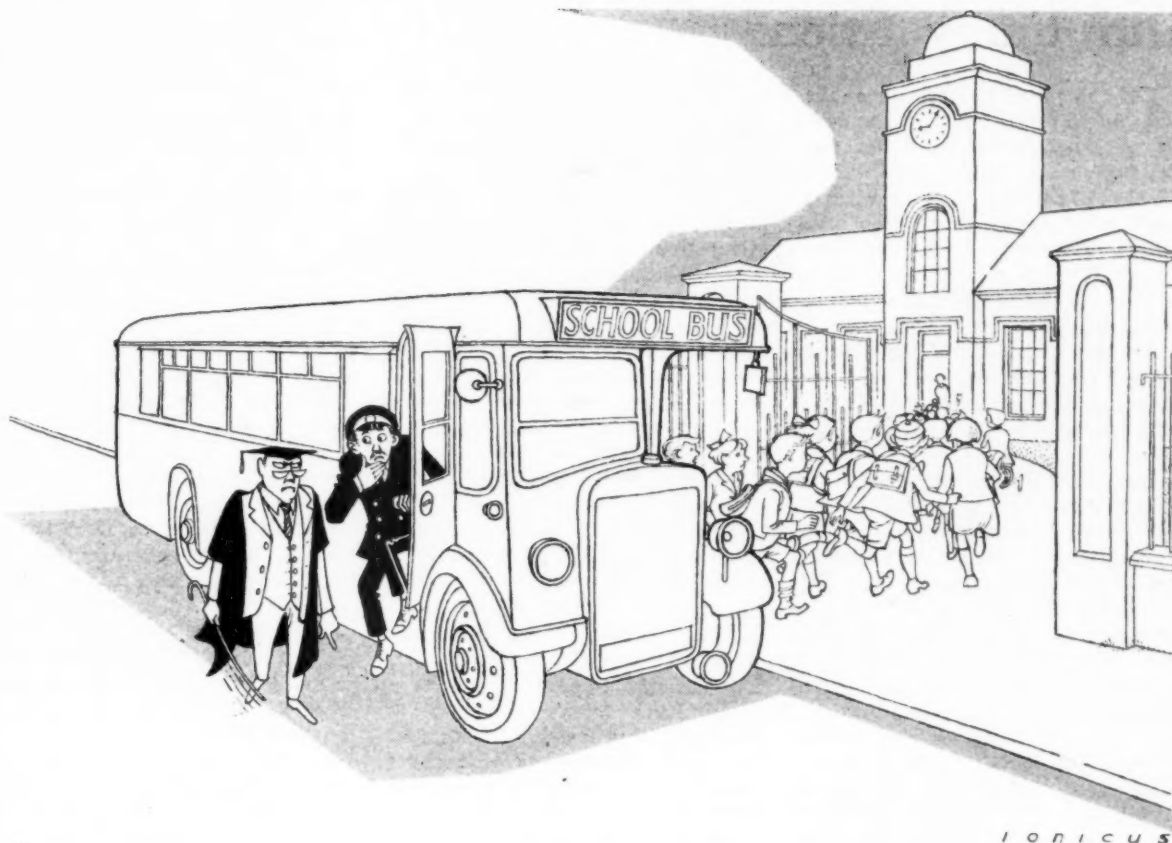
But to the great voice that blew the Garden of Eden to the winds, or so it used at least to be supposed, the worms are indifferent.

5 5

"MEDICAL SCIENCE IS TO-DAY AT THE POINT OF ANSWERING NATURE'S OLDEST RIDDLE—THE QUESTION THAT AFFECTS THE LIFE OF EVERY WOMAN WHO WANTS TO BE A MOTHER: 'WILL I HAVE A GIRL OR A BOY?'"

There are, in fact, two answers to this question:—"Woman's Sunday Mirror" What about "No" for a third?





Unkindest Cut

By MERVYN JONES

THE MINISTER of Marriage has issued a statement to defend his rationing plan for licences.

"You can't cut weddings by twenty-five per cent without hurting somebody," he told the press on his arrival at London Airport after a six weeks' holiday in Reno.

"There is no mess," he insisted. "It is as I anticipated it would be." British reserves of gold and platinum rings, said the Minister, have increased thanks to a loan from the International Amatory Fund.

Asked whether he stood by his earlier statement that "the private husband will get no sympathy from me," the Minister smiled and waved gaily to a passing air hostess.

Meanwhile clergymen, in a telegram to the Prime Minister, declared that next week-end might bring a complete breakdown of moral standards. In some parts of the country churches are open

only one day a week, and hundreds of vestrymen and vergers have been made redundant. One London vicar says: "If it were not for the funerals I should be out of business."

To waiting queues of engaged couples clergymen have to explain that they have still not received their allocations, and that they simply must make their existing stock of licences last out.

Unemployment and short time are beginning to spread, too, among dress-makers and cake firms, while hotels face their worst Easter. "We can fill our rooms with black matcheteers, but we dislike doing so," said the manager of a large seaside hotel.

Members of Parliament are receiving hundreds of letters from constituents who say that they cannot wait any longer. Told of this, the Minister replied: "I promise that I will look carefully into cases of alleged hardship."

He went on: "The number of parishes I have to deal with is something like ten thousand. A good few just won't get any licences."

One difficulty, he said, is that engaged couples have in many cases sent in their applications late. Irregularities, such as sudden demands for love, are blamed by officials. All applications will be dealt with in strict rotation, and most of those which have reached regional offices have now been granted or refused.

"Some people are bound to be disappointed," he said, "but I am not going to be frightened out of my plan." He repeated that a reduction in the wedding rate was essential in the national interest.

The Minister's last words, spoken to a girl reporter as the press conference broke up, were: "We are all in this together, aren't we?"

Our Furry Friends

By ALISON ADBURGHAM

"IN his dealings with men the furrier sees life through rose-coloured spectacles. For one thing they are all happily married; in a life-time of supplying furs for wives I could count the mistresses who have been bought for on the fingers of one hand." Thus does J. G. Links in *The Book of Fur* shatter the illusion that the wages of sin is fur coats.

Yet, even deprived of the *goût de scandale* with which imagination likes to flavour them, furs still cannot be viewed with entirely dispassionate appraisal. They are not, and never will be, just a branch of the clothing trade; as wine is to groceries, so furs are to drapery. All through the centuries furs have been associated with pride and prejudice, pomp and circumstance, and kings and rulers have decreed what fur must be worn and by whom. Had Mr. Links been furrier to Elizabeth I instead of to Elizabeth II he would have been Sergeant of the Peltry and received twelve pence a day; even more picturesquely in Henry VI's reign, he would have been Skinner to the Great Wardrobe.

Furs have always excited envy, pride and puritanism. Cato denounced the wives of Roman patricians for the

quite irrational emotionalism. Useless beauty is, of course, defenceless in a Welfare State. Yet there are many far more uselessly beautiful luxuries than furs which, when all's said and done, provide warmth and covering and may even outlast their wearers.

What, then, is that provocative something about them that twists the strait and narrow mind?—a something that arouses dormant puritanism in some women, and mocks the monk in men. Surely it is the sensuous quality of furs; and it is because of this quality, above all others, that furriers have no fear of the rivalry of nylon fur coats and other man-made fur-about. These pseudo-pelts lack the essential sensuousness of fur on skin. Equally warm they may be, and quite becoming in their way. They are very comfortable and light to wear. They are most practical—so easily kept clean, so inexpensive, so enduring. Indeed, they have everything the heart of a woman of sense could desire; but what woman with a heart has sense? The heart responds to rhyme not reason; to the caress of fur, not the feel of fabric.

And the responsive heart is by its very nature fickle, warming to each succeeding flatterer, swayed by each

earlier years? Out, utterly out. And where, too, are the long-haired furs with the jungly look? Recent attempts to bring these back into fashion have been conspicuously crowned with failure. Fitch, lynx, civet, monkey, racoon, and red fox . . . they make a dubious gathering when seen in a contemporary collection, a North Countryman's dream of Shaftesbury Avenue. Paris *couturiers*, who failed last year to gain acceptance for these furs, have this winter used them up for linings, collars, cuffs, and facings. But even so abstemiously deployed, the long-haired look is out of rapport with the *zeitgeist* of our day. These are the nineteen-fifties and as far as fashion is concerned, if no further, they are not the neo-naughties. Our fashions are demurely decorous; gently-womanly.

Although the costly furs—sables, ermine, chinchilla, mink, nutria—nod to fashion, they never beckon or lead. They are far too valuable to be so strikingly styled that they have to be killed off at the end of the season. But less prosperous pelts are now being used with direct immediacy to the mode. And it is the short-haired furs which lend themselves most successfully to such styling. A century ago the sealskin jacket was the first fur coat in the fashion sense; now hair seal, or baby seal, less rich and rare than Alaska seal, is much favoured for jackets and reefers. Almost equally debonair are jackets of river otter, black kid-skin and mole.

In the United States, where all women are equal, it would seem from their magazines that all furs are mink. Nevertheless, beaver lamb, the least expensive of all skins, is democratically held in much higher esteem over there than here. It is bleached and dyed to distraction and fondly known as "mouton"—its correct name under the Fur Labelling Act being "mouton processed lamb." At first this seems odd, this reversing of the usual phrase about mutton dressed as lamb. On second thoughts, not so odd. For is it not the aim of all lambs, once they have left the campus, to be dressed up like mutton? And without doubt it is the matron muttons who rule the North American herd.

But whether sheered sheepskin be



extravagance of wearing furs, and similar attacks have not been unknown when personal animosities have got out of hand in Borough Council Chambers. In the House of Commons, when furs are mentioned in connection with Purchase Tax, the debate takes on a

freshly seductive beguilement. Our furry friends are for ever changing their pelts. The fur they admire this season is not the one they loved a few years back. Where are all those *divine* silver foxes? Gone, utterly gone. Where are the beloved skunks, so doted on in



Hey! for Schedule D

called beaver lamb, processed lamb, or for that matter, braised mutton, let us not snobbishly shrug it off. Sheepskin has been a warm and faithful friend to man all through the centuries, ever since he had to leave Eden's temperate clime. The fur trade is the oldest trade in the world, started by the first cave man to find himself with a surplus skin; and this may well have been sheep—or lamb. In these shifting times any evidence of continuity is comforting—as indeed was pointed out by Walter de la Mare's cat in his address to his master:

*Dear God, what security
Comfort and bliss,
And to think, too, what ages
Have brought us to this.*

*You in your sheep's wool coat,
Buttons of bone,
And me in my fur-about
On the warm hearthstone.*

~ ~

"I met the 'fly-away' Polish officer at a private address behind closed doors. The interpreter and other Polish exiles present had brought him to the rendezvous by telephone."—*Daily Telegraph*
Saved a gallon that way.

SOME folk pay tax as they do earn,
Good folk and fine to see,
But for hearts that beat and spirits that
burn
You must come to Schedule D;
Sing we, sing of our Schedule bold
Where we keep now feast now fast;
Where the winds of chance blow hot and
cold
And the money we get is ours to hold
Till we pay next year for last!

Schedule E's for the office life,
A's where the gentry dwell;
But it's D for the high artistic strife,
All ink and paint and hell;
The toil by night and by day the
dream
As we follow our guiding star
From rise to fall, from gloom to
gleam—
Sing ho for the rackets lot we seem
And the rackets lot we are!

In Schedule D we may up and roam
Wherever our fancy is;
Yet we know the pleasure of hearth and
home,
Our business premises,
For which, therefore, proportionate rent
And light and heat and things
May be deemed on assessment justly
spent
And set against part of our increment
As tax-free outgoings!

Schedule D is the land of joy
Where each o'er his own doth reign
Self-employed; may ourselves employ
Us ever to greater gain!
Sing of the goal of Schedule D,
The time when our dreams come
true
And we make so much that we have
to be
Formed into a limited company
And pay as we earn, like you!

ANGELA MILNE

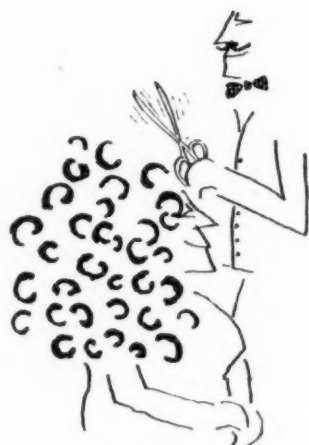


NEHRU

—ON KASHMIR

—ON SUEZ

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In the City

One Born Every Minute

WE hear many fine speeches these days about the virtues of a property-owning democracy. Every night the City's favourite feeding-grounds and drinking-holes echo with splendid phrases urging the "small man" to cut himself a piece of joint stock investment. "We want to see the number of private shareholders at least doubled," the Chairman of the Stock Exchange said last year. "And these new investors will, almost of necessity, be small investors, coming mainly from the employee classes."

Excellent. Industry needs the money, the Exchequer would welcome the disinflationary consequences of new saving, workers with a shareholding stake in industry would automatically become more "responsible," and of course more investment means more work and more pay for the denizens of the City itself. All the same I think it only fair to point out that there are possible snags in an "inflationary" burst of private investment.

Until quite recently British industry was owned by a small fraction of the population, by a class of people reasonably well schooled in the principles of investment and having the resources to play the markets with fair chances of success. There was a time when all shareholders had the leisure and the know-how to scrutinize the activities of their selected business interests, and to keep themselves well-informed about general economic and industrial trends. But industry has outgrown the stature of its shareholders, and business units have become empires so vast and many-faceted that the details of their progress are comprehensible only to a handful of specialists. It is no longer possible for

the small investor to keep tabs on his selections.

It follows, I think, that private investment is now inherently more speculative than ever before. The average investor buys and sells his shares on the strength of very meagre information and therefore takes heavy risks. To some extent this element of risk in equities has been obscured by persistent inflation, but it sits there in the background, bowler-hatted and vaguely sinister like the bailiff's man, ready to become dramatically and unpleasantly active as soon as the financial situation takes a turn for the worse.

In saying this I am appealing to the Stock Exchange to back its expansionist propaganda with an information service of real value to the new investor. It is not enough merely to urge well-to-do workers to climb on the band-wagon: they should be given expert advice on how and when to get aboard, and on the



In the Country

Random Flower Harvest

THIS is the silly season. Every post brings some seed catalogue in Technicolor which tries to persuade you that your garden could look like the photograph on the cover if only you would order a mountain of exotically named annuals, some patent fertilizer, and forget all about the fact that you no longer have a gardener. And as we sit now huddled over the fire in these drear January days, with nothing but the shuffling of Cabinets to relieve the monotony of winter, it is only too easy to indulge in daydreams of June blooms, and complete the seed merchants' order form. Even as I do so I know that I am wasting my time: some of the flowers will never be planted, none will be weeded, and those that do eventually bloom will certainly blush unseen. I'm careful not to order any

all-important manoeuvre of alighting safely. A large crop of minor investment disasters could do irreparable damage to joint stock enterprise, the Stock Exchange and the City.

It is no use ignoring the fact that the professional speculator's opportunities of making a killing are vastly improved when the commonality of investors hardly knows a bear's ear from a bull's foot, and not unnaturally it has already been hinted on the Left that the City's drive for more investors is no more than a ruse to feather its own nest.

As we move into another round of economic disturbance more and more little men will be seeking sanctuary for their savings in the inflation-proof shelters of the City. They should be given as much help as possible. In the long run the only alternative to a Stock Exchange citizen's advice bureau would be the Socialist ideal of a public investment corporation. **MAMMON**

* * *

bulbs; a friend of mine with a Hungarian cook found he had just eaten his hyacinths. Perhaps it would be safer to order onions? At any rate, if one must be extravagant let it be with perennials only. At least these only have to be planted once. Annuals should be wholly avoided.

Personally I think that the only happy gardener to-day is the one who can decide in his own mind that anything that grows is beautiful. After all, Picasso has told us that ugliness doesn't exist. From that dictum it is but a step to preferring nettles to roses, and to maintain that it was the docks that you set out to cultivate, and the odd asters among them were something you overlooked in weeding. Tools and fertilizers won't produce a border half so beautiful as the one which a tolerant eye can achieve. Perhaps we should just dig our beds over and let the wind sow what it will? As a matter of fact I've always thought cow parsley was pretty, and I might even have grown it deliberately if people hadn't told me it was a weed. How do they know? What is a weed but something which flourishes to spite us?

As for these insidious catalogues which tempt one to sow new lawns and do not refer to the cost of lawn-mowers or the labour of using them, they should all be burnt. Why doesn't the seed merchant make up a mixture of light herbs and green mosses which would grow slowly and silently and never need be cut? I once trod barefooted on such a lawn. But that is no proof that it existed. **RONALD DUNCAN**



BOOKING OFFICE

Good's Teeth

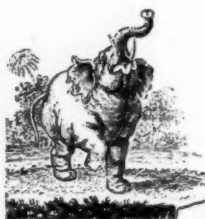
"WHAT is a gentleman?" Allan Quatermain asks in *King Solomon's Mines*; and answers: "A Royal Naval officer is, in a general sort of way, though of course there may be a black sheep among them here and there."

Captain John Good, R.N., plainly, however, did not belong to the latter category. It was his desire always to "turn out like a gentleman" that caused him, even in the African bush, to carry a supply of white gutta-percha collars; and he cut a curious figure, wearing one of these, "absolutely clean, tidy, and well-dressed" in "a shooting suit of brown tweed, with a hat to match, and neat gaiters . . . he was beautifully shaved, his eyeglass and his false teeth appeared to be in perfect order" as he sat after a meal of giraffe steaks and roasted marrow-bones.

Before going to bed "Good took off his clothes, shook them, put his eyeglass and his false teeth into his trousers pocket and, folding each article neatly, placed it out of the dew under a corner of his mackintosh sheet"; but later, elephant-hunting, he nearly "fell a victim to his passion for civilized dress. Had he consented to discard his trousers and gaiters like the rest of us, and to hunt in a flannel shirt and a pair of veldt-schoons, it would have been all right." As it was, his trousers "cumbered" him and he fell on his face in front of the charging bull that he had previously wounded.

Good clung doggedly to his trousers during an arduous trek over the mountains, under the shadow of Sheba's Breasts, in the course of which they slaked their thirst by consuming wild green melons ("Melons!" I yelled to Good, who was next me, and in another minute his false teeth were fixed in one of them"); but the time came when he was caught with these garments down—or, rather, off. He had removed the trousers in order to bathe, and while performing "a most

elaborate toilet"—which involved washing his gutta-percha collar, scrubbing his shooting-boots with *inco-fat*, and producing "from a little bag that he carried . . . a pocket-comb in which was fixed a tiny looking-glass," also "a little pocket-razor with a guard to it, such as are bought by people who are afraid of cutting themselves." The party was surprised by the emissaries of Twala, the great king—"Twala, husband of a thousand wives, chief and lord paramount of the Kukuanas, Keeper of the



great Road, terror of his enemies, student of the Black Arts, leader of a hundred thousand warriors, Twala the One-eyed, the Black, the Terrible."

Threatened with instant death, Good groaned "Oh, Lord!"; "and, as was his way when perplexed, he put his hand to his false teeth, dragging the top set down and allowing them to fly back to his jaw with a snap." The natives were terrified and overawed by this manoeuvre, and the astute Quatermain seized his opportunity to transform Good into a figure of terror, attributing to all of them an outer-stellar origin: "The light from the transparent eye of

him with the bare legs and the half-haired face shall destroy you, and go through your land; his vanishing teeth shall fix themselves fast in you and eat you up, you and your wives and children . . . Beware!"

The days of brown tweeds and "civilized dress" were temporarily over, though it took Good "a fortnight to become accustomed to his new and scant attire."

It was his bare "beautiful white legs" that Foulata, of the house of Suko, "the soft-eyed, shapely Kukuana beauty," clasped while imploring the "white father from the stars" to save her from Gagool, the bald vulture-headed witch.

"All right, my hearty, I'll look after you," Good sang out "in nervous Saxon," and he did actually save the day during the eclipse of the moon which followed: attributed by Quatermain to their own magical powers. ("Keep it up, Good, I can't remember any more poetry. Curse away, there's a good fellow . . . Never before had I the faintest conception of the breadth and depth and height of a naval officer's objuratory powers.")

The eclipse came off successfully and Foulata's life was duly spared: she in turn saved Good from dying of a wound, which—being "a very decent surgeon"—he had stitched up himself after one of the most bloodthirsty battles in literary history. (During this action, Good, having recovered his trousers, insisted on retaining them, and tucking his chain-mail shirt into the "very seedy pair of corduroys.")

But Foulata finally died, "stabbed in the body" by Gagool (who in her turn was crushed to death by the stone door of the treasure-chamber), and she expired in Good's arms, renouncing his love in a poignant speech interpreted by Quatermain: "I am glad to die because I know that he cannot cumber his life with such as I am, for the sun may not mate with the darkness, nor the white with the black . . ."; the tears ran down Good's honest face; but he himself lived on to appear, the day after his return to

England, "beautifully shaved, frockcoat fitting like a glove, brand-new eyeglass, etc., etc.", furious with Sir Henry Curtis for repeating the story of his "beautiful white legs" to some people in the park: "As for Good, he is no good," Sir Henry wrote to Quatermain; "His time is too much occupied in shaving, and other matters connected with the vain adorning of the body . . . but he told me that since he had been home he hadn't seen a woman to touch Foulata, either as regards her figure or the sweetness of her expression . . ." though his sorrow did not prevent him from going to shoot at Sir Henry's house, where the tusks of the elephant that almost killed him were hung up in the hall.

J. MACLAREN-ROSS.

Noble and Manly: The History of the National Sporting Club. Guy Deghy. Hutchinson, 25/-

The Pelican Club, a late Victorian amalgam of the more beef-fed members of the House of Lords and the staff and hangers-on of *The Pink 'Un*, existed for rowdy wagering on marathon fights, often bare-fisted and heavily alcoholic. Born out of it in 1891, the National Sporting Club was less aristocratic and also less raffish. Boxing was still only a convenient medium for betting; bellows for "More gore!" mingled prettily with the cries of the ringside bookies. But since organized betting demanded fair play, the N.S.C. was obliged to clean up a sport as crooked as its victims' noses. The new club became respectable, put British boxing on the map, and survived for nearly forty years, when it was starved out by the big promoters.

This is a loose but compendious book, full of information about notable bashings and batterings. In its numerous illustrations the faces on the paying side of the ropes are infinitely more terrifying than those of the simple fellows in the ring.

E. O. D. K.

Winter's Tales—2. Macmillan, 16/-

Once upon a time a short story began somewhere and moved on to somewhere

else, more crudely had a plot; now it is often what was then called a sketch, a picture of some situation mental or physical ending in a full-stop. Many of the contributions to the second *Winter's Tales* might qualify as stories, old-style, but that the movement is a ripple not a wave and plot elusive as in Mary Clive's "Entirely Platonic," in which two empty-hearted moderns make holiday amusingly on an Italian island, only a flash in the last sentence bringing the story full circle.

Some of the twelve tales included are from pens already admired, some from the unknown, all are interesting, if not characteristic of their authors, and some demand very close attention. Most readers would be happy to hear more of their actors. It is to be hoped that the publishers will continue to offer the short story at its best, now too often vainly seeking a home, this pleasantly illustrated series.

B. E. S.

The Life and Times of Herod the Great. Stewart Perowne. Hodder and Stoughton, 21/-

The relations of Rome with the client kingdoms, the feuds between Jew and Arab, the complex family feuds of the Hasmonaeans, Nabateans and Herodians, the security, prosperity and adornment that Palestine gained from Herod in his best years and the terror of his years of madness make an exciting and unfamiliar story with many modern applications. Mr. Perowne is interested in his subject on many levels and he combines experience in political administration and in Palestinian archaeology, he deals fully with Herod's building and his illustrations are abundant and excellent.

Unfortunately, he has crammed his material into about a third of the space that it needs. It is true that once one has ploughed through the impacted mass of proper names in the opening chapters one finds the going a little easier, though only by comparison. When Mr. Perowne occasionally allows himself a paragraph instead of half a sentence to describe a chain of events he shows a considerable narrative gift, but he lacks the knack of summarizing without clotting.

R. G. G. P.

The Nude. Sir Kenneth Clark. Murray, 63/-

Sir Kenneth Clark, who has as much as any living writer brought visual art to life for numbers of people, here attempts—successfully—to bring the prejudice-surrounded nude to life. In doing so he blows away two old cobwebs of nonsense. First he routs the idea that great art (of the nude) is free from erotic feeling; whether we admire Madame Rubens or Madame Renoir or not, presumably Rubens and Renoir did. I would go farther than Sir Kenneth and suggest that our appreciation of the body is educated by paintings and sculptures. Cobweb 2, as dispersed by Sir Kenneth,



"Dear Mr. Macmillan, I was so thrilled when they made you Prime Minister; I've always admired you and I wish you every success.

P.S. I enclose the manuscript of my first novel for your kind consideration."

is that great art comes out of the blue: it is the result of much painful pruning with the past as a yard-stick and inspiration. He traces the development of Michelangelo, Raphael, Degas and others in this respect. The arrangement of the book into chapters devoted to the Nudes respectively of Venus, Energy, Pathos, etc., from the Greeks down to the present, is admirable; and the illustrations—not *grande luxe*—adequate.

A. D.

Further Fables for Our Time. James Thurber. Hamish Hamilton, 13/6

Thurber knows all about us. His satire has mankind nicely buttoned up. In his wisdom he sees all round the pathetic and futile pretensions to which we humanly cling; but fortunately he likes us, so long as we are not pompous, neither busybodies nor fanatics, nor infected with overbearing missionary zeal. He is all for the innocent pleasure of the free and humble individual who doesn't throw his weight about next door. "Oh, why should the shattermyth have to be a crumblehope and a dampen-gee?" he asks, after his fact-worshipping squirrel has killed all the romance in the forest. His definition of a philosopher, one who seeks a magnificent explanation for his insignificance, is basic Thurber.

These forty-seven fables are beautifully written, in deceptively simple



Solution to last week's Crossword.

English, and wittily; only Thurber could make the first man warn the doomed dinosaur that "monstrosity is the behemoth of extinction," and only he could have matched his furred and feathered moralities with drawings of exactly the right absurdity.

E. O. D. K.

The South Western Railway. Hamilton Ellis. *Allen and Unwin*, 30/-

In his latest volume Mr. Hamilton Ellis is in what may be described as his medium mood, less poetical than he showed himself to be in *The Beauty of Old Trains* or his earlier classic *The Trains We Loved*, but not so formidably technical as he was in *British Railway History 1830-1876*. The South Western is very much the railway of Mr. Ellis's heart and family associations. Loyalty in fact makes him almost irritable at Kipling's comment that "all things were possible to the London and South Western Railway on a Sunday," and this irritation is only partially allayed by the undeniable fact that Kipling himself sent out a milk train from Waterloo on the South Western and committed the solecism of running it on to the Great Western line at Dawlish.

Indeed, Mr. Ellis sometimes finds it rather hard to forgive the Great Western for its easier line to Plymouth and a certain *chic* in its personal legend, but his enthusiasm for the engines, stations and

coaches of the South Western is infectious. Of the personalities involved the most dramatic is perhaps Dugald Drummond, still reputed to haunt the line by Brookwood Necropolis, and to curse the drivers of to-day's locomotives, as in life he cursed the drivers of those he built.

V. G. P.

Lines of Life. François Mauriac. Translated by Gerard Hopkins. *Eyre and Spottiswoode*, 12/6

Many people claim that Mauriac is the greatest living novelist. I find him too narrow to be that; but he seems to me easily the greatest living master of ordering a tale, the most professional in attracting, retaining and controlling attention without concessions of any kind. How economical he is. This is only a long-short story, but he seems to have endless room to describe, to evoke and to discuss, though he is recounting quite a complex sequence of events.

It is early Mauriac and vintage Mauriac, the amateur theologian still controlled by the artist. The narrative is one flesh with the argument. The Mauriac atmosphere is concentrated: pines and vines, the hard, hard-working, pious province compared with the sinful, indulgent capital; the religious odious and right, the worldlings appealing and wrong; the generations swinging from bitter conflict to unhealthy possession; the resinous, burning, airless countryside,

the attractions and repulsions of the human body. The story never flags. It is never predictable and never unconvincing. In my case it suspended a good deal of disbelief.

R. G. G. P.

AT THE PLAY

Light Falling

The Shadow of a Gunman
(LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)



THE *Shadow of a Gunman* (misnamed on the inside of the programme) is only a moderate flame beside the blaze of its two immediate successors, but in this first play O'Casey already showed signs of being a master of low-life humour. It is the satiric comedy of punctured aspirations, not the tragedy of Minnie Powell's heroic end, that remains freshest in it still. Small wonder that foaming patriots were furious to find so promising a new playwright far from willing to toe the party line on the splendours of the Irish character.

O'Casey had the courage to point out, with savage irony, the vital difference between the theory and practice of being eager to die for one's country. Many of the inmates of his Dublin tenement blow up the British Empire every time they open their mouths, but when the street whistles with bullets and the Black-and-Tans batter at the door, poor little over-dressed Minnie is the only one who sticks to her faith. The rest go to pieces, until such time as they can restore themselves with big words. On the evidence O'Casey was surely lucky to have escaped with his life.

In this piece the Irish Players are stoutly led, and well produced by John Gibson (grumble: the door fits so badly that the next-to-enter can be seen queuing up, which is horribly distracting). The two men—almost Godot-like in their contrasted hopelessness—who share the bedroom in which the action takes place are happily cast. As the Dublin spiv who hawks defective braces when he can be bothered to get up, and who attacks his friend's futility to mask his own, Jack MacGowran is continuously funny. He would be funnier still if his machine-gun delivery could be slowed down enough to give us a chance to separate the stream of words; but he is an original comedian with a strong sense of mime, and the fact that his extraordinary neck action has obviously been copied from a hen is absolutely nothing against it. His fellow, the feeble poet flattered to be thought a gunman, Desmond Jordan rightly interprets as a second cousin of the Playboy. The neighbours who potter on do so in the outside Irish tradition, and Natalie Kent's stage widow, bulbously bombazine, Harry Hurchinson's alley-lawyer and Patrick Magee's belligerent drunk are all in the Abbey mould.

Tieresa Deevey's curtain-raiser, *Light Falling*, is helped by a good performance



Donal Davoren—DESMOND JORDAN

Seumas Shields—JACK MACGOWRAN

from that fine actor, J. G. Devlin, who must have been glad of a sitting part after his exhausting march in Samuel Beckett's radio play the night before. Otherwise it is sentimental, silly, and indifferently acted.

Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Diary of Anne Frank (Phoenix—5/12/56), harrowing little tragedy. *Under Milk Wood* (New—29/8/56), faithful slice of Dylan Thomas. *At the Drop of a Hat* (Fortune—16/1/57), brilliant two-man revue, moved in from the New Lindsey. ERIC KEOWN



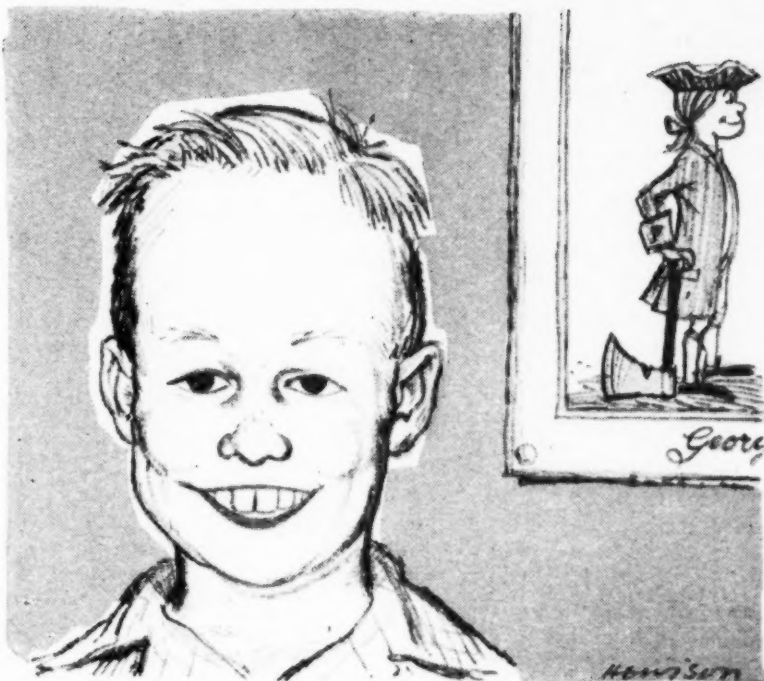
AT THE PICTURES

Teenage Rebel
Everything but the Truth
Four Girls in Town

FROM the title itself, one can tell the sort of public they are expecting (or counting on) for *Teenage Rebel* (Director: Edmund Goulding); and indeed there is plenty in it for that public. But in another way the title is misleading. The director, the producer and co-script-writer (Charles Brackett) and the director of photography (Joe MacDonald) are all people worthy of respect, and there is also in the film quite a bit that would please and interest numbers of moviegoers whom that title will repel.

It is from a play by Edith Sommer, and opens as a mother (Ginger Rogers) is eagerly expecting the arrival of a fifteen-year-old daughter not seen since her divorce from the girl's father. The mother now has been for years happy with her new husband, and has a seven-year-old son by him; at her divorce, the court allowed her to have her daughter for three weeks every year, but the father by living abroad (and the implication is that he lived abroad for this reason only) contrived to do her out of this pleasure. When the child comes, she proves to be a self-conscious little sneerer very difficult to like, and the story is simply an account of the way determined affection and happy domesticity and the companionship of other neighbouring children softened her up.

The whole affair is what is known as a "woman's picture," and it is sentimental and over-emotional, but there are very good points about it. The narrative is constantly freshened with imaginative and interesting touches. I remember as typical a tiny scene near the beginning, when the mother meets the girl at an airport. The camera eye moves with them as they walk; the girl makes some disconcerting reply, and then our view of them is immediately cut off as they pass behind a pillar. It is when they reappear that we see the mother's astonished reaction. This may sound simple and obvious, but such devices, only possible in films, make all the difference.



Willie Taylor—TIM HOVEY

[*Everything but the Truth*]

This was one of those weeks. *Teenage Rebel*, by no means an important work, was I think the only new film shown to the Press; but *Zarak*, of which nearly everybody has heard because of all that House of Lords fuss about the poster advertising it, opened with a splash "première." It is perhaps possible to infer the reason why the critics were not invited to see this—anyway, I don't regret not having had to see it. What I did catch was a double-feature programme at the Leicester Square: *Everything but the Truth* (Director: Jerry Hopper) and *Four Girls in Town* (Director: Jack Sher). Neither of these was shown to the Press either, and yet both are entertaining, amusing, quite intelligent pictures, worthy of a better fate than a double bill, which for most moviegoers (even in London; I know it's normal outside) means that one or the other will be seen from the middle to the end and then, after an hour or two, from the beginning to the middle.

Everything but the Truth is about a small boy (Tim Hovey) who, instructed by his teacher (Maureen O'Hara) always to tell the truth, tells it about a conversation he has overheard that involves the local mayor in questionable dealings. Encouraged by the teacher, he sticks to his story in face of all the local fuss, and the affair snowballs into a national controversy. The picture has too much facetious background music, but it is nicely done, with plenty of amusing detail, and most people should like it.

Four Girls in Town is satirical about Hollywood, of which it gives us a conducted tour. It is based on a studio's world-wide search for a girl to take the leading part in a film: the four girls come from France, Italy, Austria and the U.S. itself (no English girl—there's no doubt a reason for that), and the story follows their fortunes. At the fade-out each has found a man, but the film part goes to the star whose intransigence (she demanded "fifty per cent of the profits and retention of the negative after seven years") started the search to begin with. This too is brightly and amusingly done and introduces several interesting new faces.

Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

The Academy has a pair of revivals—René Clair's *Summer Manœuvres*, and the 1935 Hungarian classic *Hortobagy*, about the "Czikos" and their great herds of horses and cattle. *War and Peace* (28/11/56) continues, and *Giant* (16/1/57), and, among those of more manageable size, *Baby Doll* (9/1/57), *Gervaise* (19/12/56) and *The Silent World* (12/12/56).

Only one of the new releases was reviewed here, and not very respectfully: *Love Me Tender* (2/1/57). Two more, quite worth seeing in their very different ways, are *Three Violent People* and *Spring Reunion*, which gives Betty Hutton a quiet, serious part she does very well.

RICHARD MALLETT



ON THE AIR

Jackpot Politics

ONE of the saddest changes brought about by commercial television has been the decline in quality and integrity of Party Political Broadcasts. The fact that these party pieces are now screened by both B.B.C. and I.T.V. seems to have persuaded the propagandists that the cheaper advertising techniques will win more viewers than reasoned argument and a dispassionate parade of policy. Pretty soon now we shall be told to vote Left or Right by puppets mouthing catchy jingles. Mrs. Homebody will tell us that "next to my family I like Right-clean M.P.s—doh, doh, right-clean, right-clean"; and Mrs. Housefrow will urge us to "use Left because it is so much Lefter than Right."

I am exaggerating only mildly. The latest TV broadcast by the Labour Party—on housing—employed most of the tricks plugged by manufacturers of commercials. Every speaker in the film, from Margaret Herbison and Harold Hutchinson down to professional actors masquerading as disgruntled house-hunters, slum-dwellers and private builders, used the double-take gimmick, swinging round suddenly with wide eyes to address the fireside audience in terse non-sequiturs. Every snatch of dialogue sounded like a carefully edited unsolicited testimonial and the narrative was couched in terms that only anonymous copy-writers would care to commit to print.

The dramatization of the forces of good and evil was completely ruined by the pantomimic props. Evil in the shape of a fat and apoplectic private builder



[Val Parnell's Star Time

HILDA BAKER PAT KIRKWOOD TOMMY STEELE

swilled ale from a pint mug, while Mr. Interlocutor, Harold Hutchinson, sipped weak tea. There were panoramic views of slums and housing estates that might, for all we knew, have been anywhere and in any decade. It would have been more fun, and no more misleading, to show private builder's houses falling down as fast as they were put up, the bruised and enraged occupiers shaking their fists at Conservatism, Landlordism and Private Enterprise.

Channel Nine reacted very smartly to the big news from Downing Street and Buckingham Palace, and Granada's public conference on the constitutional and political issues was a fifteen-minute digest of remarkable ingenuity. It looked and sounded rather like a B.B.C. "Any Questions" programme run through at twice the normal speed. Robin Day worked the panel (two journalists and a don) and the audience like galley slaves: not a second was wasted, no one was

allowed to gather his thoughts or pause for breath. As the questioners fired their volleys from the floor the cameras zoomed in and away like dive-bombers. Then a staccato answer from one panelist echoed by "Nothing to add" and "No comment" from his colleagues. Phew! The technique hogged the programme.

The most amusing radio item (for me) in recent weeks has been the Third Programme repeat of Dylan Thomas's New York poetry readings. Thomas had a voice of power and rumbustious richness, but in these recordings he sounds like a tone-deaf town-crier, siphoning off great torrents of noise without reference to the meaning or music of the selected poems. One reason, I believe, why poetry is in the doghouse to-day is the manner of its recital on the air, the booming liturgical incantations that make all poets and poems sound alike, pretentious and fatuous. Most lyrical poetry is for the eye and the inner ear, a matter for personal interpretation and private enjoyment, and it helps not at all to hear pattern, sense and rhythm mutilated by readers trying to reach the highest common factor of literate listeners.

Finally, two needs of praise. The first, for Pat Kirkwood, crooning, singing and being her gay and wholesome self in I.T.A.'s "Star Time." The second, for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's dramatic gem *Some Are So Lucky* (B.B.C.), featuring in Anna Cameron an actress of exceptional skill. The C.B.C.'s Television Theatre has so far given us a mixed bag—a brilliant short play, *Flight Into Danger*, and a lot of drivel. But the hook-up is very welcome.

BERNARD HOLLOWOOD



DOUGLASS.

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